

# The Image of the Virgin Nursing (*Galaktotrophousa*) and a Unique Inscription on the Seals of Romanos, Metropolitan of Kyzikos

JOHN COTSONIS

Romanos served as the metropolitan of Kyzikos, a city on the southern coast of the Sea of Marmara, on the landward side of the isthmus of the region of Mysia, during the third quarter of the eleventh century.<sup>1</sup> Three parallel examples of lead seals that he issued during this period have survived and have been published (Figs. 1–3).<sup>2</sup> With this article, two other speci-

mens are added to this group for the first time (Figs. 4 and 5).<sup>3</sup> The obverse of these seals bears an image of the Virgin, seated on a high-backed throne with her feet resting on a footstool, nursing the Christ Child, who reclines on her left breast. The enthroned Virgin is flanked by her usual sigla,  $\overline{\text{MP}} \overline{\text{ΘV}}$  —  $\text{Μή(τη)ρ Θ(εο)ῦ}$  (Mother of God). The inscription encircling this image reads

+ΚΕΘΘ̄CMΘEOICCEELΠΙΖΩΝΘ  
KATAICXVNET,

Κ(ύρι)ε ὁ Θ(εό)ς μου, ὁ εἰς σὲ ἐλπίζων οὐ  
καταισχύνητ(αι)

“Lord, my God, whoever hopes in you is not  
put to shame.”

The reverse has a seven-line invocative inscription:

• Funds for the accompanying photographs were kindly provided by Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology. I wish to thank Margaret Mullett, the two anonymous readers and Joel Kalvesmaki for their insightful comments and suggestions for improving this paper. I am grateful to Jean-Claude Cheynet for providing photographs of the two seals from the Bibliothèque nationale de France. English translations of the New Testament and Old Testament come from the King James Version and Brenton (*The Septuagint Version of the Old Testament* [London, 1844]). All other translations, unless otherwise credited, are my own.

1 For a list of the few datable textual references to Romanos as the metropolitan of Kyzikos, see *PBW*, Romanos 108, <http://www.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/id/person/108632> (accessed 1 February 2010). For overviews of the Byzantine metropolis of Kyzikos, see F. W. Hasluck, *Cyzicus* (Cambridge, 1910), 192–209; C. Mango and I. Ševčenko, “Some Churches and Monasteries on the Southern Shore of the Sea of Marmara,” *DOP* 27 (1973): 235–79, correcting earlier observations made by Hasluck; R. Janin, *Les églises et les monastères des grands centres byzantins* (Paris, 1975), 193–214; and “Kyzikos,” *ODB* 2:1164–65.

2 The one example belonging to the Fogg Museum of Art, no. 707, was most recently published in *DOSeals* 3: no. 53.8. A second specimen belonging to the George Zacos collection appeared in G. Zacos, *Byzantine Lead Seals*, vol. 2, ed. J. Nesbitt (Berne, 1984), no. 879, pl. 85. The third example, in the Moscow State Historical Museum, was originally published by N. Lihačev, *Istoričeskoe značenie*

*italo-grečeskoj ikonopisi izobrazenija Bogomateri* (St. Petersburg, 1911), 163. The *PBW* mistakenly assigns this third example to the Hermitage. A description of the seals, including a transcription and translation of their inscriptions, along with a listing of all their citations of publication is also found in the *PBW*, boulloterion 975, <http://db.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/id/boulloterion/975> (accessed 1 February 2010). The *PBW*’s iconographic description, however, does not describe the image of the Virgin and Child as the Virgin Nursing.

3 The two specimens belong to the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris, nos. 1874 and 1875.



FIG. 1  
Lead seal of Romanos, metropolitan of Kyzikos and *synkellos*, eleventh century, Fogg 707, Arthur M. Sackler Museum, Harvard University Art Museums, Cambridge, MA, Bequest of Thomas Whittemore, 1951.31.5.707 (diam. 30 mm). Virgin Galaktotrophousa on obverse (photo courtesy of the museum)



FIG. 2 Lead seal of Romanos, metropolitan of Kyzikos and *synkellos*, eleventh century, Zacos Collection (diam. 32 mm). Virgin Galaktotrophousa on obverse (photo after Zacos, *Byzantine Lead Seals*, 2: no. 879, pl. 85)



FIG. 3 Lead seal of Romanos, metropolitan of Kyzikos and *synkellos*, eleventh century, GIM 93368 KP-820772 P-5880, State Historical Museum, Moscow. Virgin Galaktotrophousa on obverse (photo courtesy of the museum)



FIG. 4  
Lead seal of Romanos, metropolitan of Kyzikos and *synkellos*, eleventh century, no. 1874, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris. Virgin Galaktotrophousa on obverse (photo courtesy of Jean-Claude Cheynet)



FIG. 5  
Lead seal of Romanos, metropolitan of Kyzikos and *synkellos*, eleventh century, no. 1875, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris. Virgin Galaktotrophousa on obverse (photo courtesy of Jean-Claude Cheynet)

+Θ̅Κ̅Ε̅Ρ̅Θ̅|Τ̅Ω̅C̅Δ̅Θ̅|Λ̅Ρ̅Ω̅Μ̅Α̅Ν̅Ω̅|  
Μ̅Ρ̅Ο̅Π̅Ο̅Λ̅Ι̅Τ̅Η̅|Κ̅Υ̅Ζ̅Ι̅Κ̅Ο̅Υ̅S̅|C̅Υ̅Γ̅Κ̅Ε̅Λ̅|Λ̅Ω̅-  
Θ̅(εοτό)κε β̅(οή)θ̅(ει) τ̅ῳ̅ σ̅ῳ̅ δ̅οῦλ̅(ω) Ῥ̅ω̅μ̅αν̅ῳ̅  
μ̅(η)τ̅ρο̅πο̅λί̅τ̅η̅ Κυ̅ζ̅ί̅κου̅ (καὶ) συ̅γκ̅έ̅λλ̅ω̅  
“Theotokos, help your servant Romanos,  
metropolitan of Kyzikos and *synkellos*.”<sup>4</sup>

Surviving Byzantine images of the Virgin Nursing, or Virgin *Galaktotrophousa*, are very uncommon compared to numerous other Marian iconographic types,<sup>5</sup> even on lead seals: from my database of

9,202 examples with religious figural images (of which 3,870 depict the Theotokos), ranging from the sixth to the fifteenth century and drawn from published collections, the image of the Virgin Nursing is found on just four examples: the first three pieces mentioned above from the metropolitan Romanos and one specimen

4 Instead of the suspension mark on the reverse, line 3, character 2, the BnF specimens have Ω.

5 For a study of the significance and relative rarity of the image of the Virgin Galaktotrophousa in Byzantine art, see A. Cutler, “The Cult of the *Galaktotrophousa* in Byzantium and Italy,” *JÖB* 37

(1987): 335–50 (repr. in idem, *Byzantium, Italy and the North: Papers on Cultural Relations* [London, 2000], 164–89), which also includes a discussion of Romanos’s seal (341, fig. 1), as well as a similar image on the seal of a contemporary, Michael Ophrydas, a member of the civil bureaucracy (341–42, fig. 2). Cutler, however, cites only two examples of Romanos’s seals: that of the Moscow State Historical Museum and that belonging to the Zacos collection. For a discussion of the early Coptic images of the Galaktotrophousa, see E. Bolman, “The Enigmatic Coptic *Galaktotrophousa* and the Cult of the Virgin Mary in Egypt,” in *Images of the Mother of God: Perceptions of the Theotokos in Byzantium*, ed. M. Vassilaki (Aldershot, 2005), 13–22.

from the eleventh-century judge and *notarios* Michael Ophrydas.<sup>6</sup>

When selecting images for their seals, bishops and metropolitans usually chose a saint that had traditional associations with the hierarchs' sees, such as John the Theologian for the metropolitans of Ephesos, and Demetrios for those of Thessalonike.<sup>7</sup> If not the image of the saint who enjoyed a local cult, or in the absence of a local saint's cult, hierarchs then most often selected an image of the Virgin for their seals. Only in a very few instances did they choose an image of their homonymous saint.<sup>8</sup> In a singularly rare instance in Attaleia of Pamphylia, an image of a local, famous, and miraculous icon was used for a hierarch's seal.<sup>9</sup>

In my database of religious figural seals, Kyzikos has seventeen examples, ranging from the seventh to the twelfth century, belonging to fourteen different individual bishops and metropolitans of the city. Eleven seals bear an image of the Mother of God; one has an image of Christ;<sup>10</sup> one depicts St. Basil;<sup>11</sup> two exhibit St. Demetrios as the single owner's homonymous saint;<sup>12</sup> and two holy figures are uncertain.<sup>13</sup> So Romanos followed a practice common both locally and empire-wide among ecclesiastics, that of selecting an image of the Theotokos for his seals. But Romanos's

employment of the image of the Virgin Nursing was most uncommon, emphasized by the accompanying rare inscription presented in the opening paragraph.

The Virgin is the most popular holy figure depicted on seals, and her image was the one most frequently used by hierarchs of the Church. In the case of the metropolitan see of Kyzikos, however, there was a long, specific, and close association with the cult of the Virgin that could further explain the use of her image for the metropolitan seals of this see.<sup>14</sup> At least three churches dedicated to the Mother of God were known in the metropolis of Kyzikos during the Byzantine period.<sup>15</sup> One of these enjoyed particular prestige: the Theotokos *Phaneromene* (Virgin of the Apparition), also referred to as the *Acheiropoiotos* ([image] not made by hands), indicating the presence either of an icon of the Mother of God reputed to be of miraculous origin or of a reproduction of a famous icon in the capital.<sup>16</sup> This shrine was originally a pre-Christian temple dedicated to Rhea, the mother of the gods, who enjoyed a great cult in Kyzikos. During the reign of the emperor Zeno (474–491) the temple was converted to a church dedicated to the Mother of God. Throughout the Byzantine period this conversion was perceived as part of the divine plan of salvation. In his sixth-century world history, the chronicler John Malalas recounts the episode of Jason and the Argonauts, who, during their stay in Kyzikos, built a temple in the city and then asked the oracle at Pythia Therma to whom the temple should be dedicated. The response announced a triune God whose Word would be conceived by a virgin whose name is Mary—it should be her house.<sup>17</sup> The prophecy was then engraved above the entrance to the temple. It

6 For the three seals belonging to Romanos, see n. 2 above. For the seal of Michael Ophrydas, see V. Šandrovskaja, "Sfragistika," in *Iskusstvo Vizantii v Sobranijach SSSR: Katalog Vystavki*, 3 vols. (Moscow, 1977), 2: no. 802 and Cutler, "Cult of the *Galaktotrophousa*," 341–42, fig. 2.

7 For a survey of these trends in metropolitans' sphragistic imagery, see J. Cotsonis, "Saints and Cult Centers: A Geographic and Administrative Perspective in Light of Byzantine Lead Seals," *SBS* 8 (2003): 9–19.

8 *Ibid.*, 12–17.

9 A certain Theodosios, bishop of Attaleia in Pamphylia during the second half of the eleventh century, placed on his seal a representation of the celebrated Lukan icon of the Virgin *Aigyptia* (the Egyptian) which belonged to the homonymously named church in that city. J. Cotsonis and J. Nesbitt, "The Virgin *Aigyptia* (The Egyptian) on a Byzantine Lead Seal of Attaleia," *Byzantion* 78 (2008): 103–13.

10 Zacos, *Byzantine Lead Seals*, 2: no. 552.

11 V. Laurent, *Le corpus des sceaux de l'empire byzantin*, vol. 5, pts. 1–3 (Paris, 1963–72) (hereafter *Corpus*, 5/1), 1: no. 352.

12 Zacos, *Byzantine Lead Seals*, no. 446 and *DOSeals* 3, no. 53.3.

13 Laurent, *Corpus*, 5.1: no. 349 and I. Koltsida-Makre, *Βυζαντινά μολυβδόβουλλα συλλογής Ὁρφανίδη-Νικολαΐδη Νομισματικοῦ Μουσείου Ἀθηνῶν* (Athens, 1996), no. 245.

14 For the Byzantine metropolis of Kyzikos, see above, n. 1.

15 Janin, *Les églises et monastères*, 202–5.

16 *Ibid.*, 203–4.

17 John Malalas, *Chronographia*, ed. L. Dindorf (Bonn, 1831), 77–78: "ἐγὼ δὲ ἐφετμέω τρεῖν ἕνα μῶνον ὑψιμέδοντα θεόν, οὗ λόγος ἀφθίτος ἐν ἀδαεὶ κόρη ἐγκυος ἔσται. Οὗτος ὥσπερ τόξον πυριφόρον μέσον διαδραμῶν ἅπαντα κόσμον, ζωγρεύσας πατρὶ προσάξει δῶρον. Αὐτῆς ἔσται δόμος, Μαρία δὲ τοῦνομα αὐτῆς. Καὶ γράψαντες τὸν χρησμὸν οἱ ἥρωες ἐν λίθῳ, ἤτοι μαρμάρῳ, χαλκοῖς γράμμασιν, ἔθηκαν εἰς τὸ ὑπέρθυρον τοῦ ναοῦ, καλέσαντες τὸν οἶκον 'Ρέας μητρὸς θεῶν. ὅστις οἶκος μετὰ χρόνους πολλοὺς ἐγένετο ἐκκλησία τῆς ἁγίας καὶ Θεοτόκου Μαρίας ὑπὸ Ζήνωνος βασιλέως." For an English translation, see *The Chronicle of John Malalas*, trans. E. Jeffreys, M. Jeffreys, and R. Scott, *ByzAus* 5 (Melbourne, 1986), 37–38. An abbreviated version of the story is found in the seventh-century excerpts of John of Antioch in *Fragmenta historicorum graecorum*, ed. K. Müller,

was this temple that became the church of the Virgin during the reign of the emperor Zeno. The legend was later repeated, almost word for word, in the chronicle of the twelfth-century historian George Kedrenos.<sup>18</sup>

In 610, this church of the Theotokos, actually in Artake (Hyrtakion), a suburb of Kyzikos, achieved prominence when the metropolitan of Kyzikos, Stephen, presented the emperor Herakleios with a crown from the church as a divine aid in the emperor's battle against the usurper Phokas.<sup>19</sup> Much later, in 1328, the emperor Andronikos III traveled through Kyzikos to venerate a celebrated icon of the Mother of God known as Acheiropoietos that was kept in this church in Artake.<sup>20</sup> Toward the end of the fourteenth century, the icon of the Virgin Acheiropoietos in Artake was still an object worthy of significant pilgrimage and possessing patriarchal rights. The rights for overseeing the icon were given by Patriarch Neilos to Matthew, the newly elected metropolitan of Kyzikos, in 1387.<sup>21</sup>

A monastery dedicated to the Theotokos Phaneromene, equidistant between Artake and Peramos, and linked administratively to the latter, was a locus of pilgrimage that continued up into the twentieth century. A celebrated, miracle-working icon of the Virgin, known as the Phaneromene, had

been transferred to this monastery from the Μέγας Ἀγρός (the Great Field), a monastery across the isthmus on the mainland (Bithynia) that was destroyed in the beginning of the fourteenth century by either Ottoman Turks or Catalan mercenaries.<sup>22</sup> This icon of the Virgin Phaneromene from the monastery of Peramos still exists: in 1922 it was transferred to the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul.<sup>23</sup> It is a standard Hodegetria type and has been assigned to either the twelfth or thirteenth century, and thus could not have been a prototype for Romanos's seal.<sup>24</sup> Given that this monastery of the Phaneromene, which guarded the homonymous icon now in the Patriarchate, is situated between Artake and Peramos, various scholars claim that there is no reason not to identify the icon with that of the pilgrimage icon of the fourteenth century placed at Artake, which Andronikos III venerated.<sup>25</sup>

There was, however, another celebrated Byzantine Marian icon on the isthmus of Kyzikos which was in competition with the Acheiropoietos Phaneromene. This other venerated icon was housed at the monastery of the Theotokos *Lebentistra*, in the valley of Egri Dere near Saint George, close to the center of the northern

5 vols. (Paris, 1848–78), 4: no. 15, 548. See also Hasluck, *Cyzicus*, 24–28 and 161–62 and Janin, *Les églises et monastères*, 203.

18 George Kedrenos, *Synopsis historion*, ed. I. Bekker, 2 vols., CSHB (Bonn, 1838–39), 1:209–10.

19 Theophanes the Confessor, *Chronographia*, ed. C. de Boor, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1883–85 [repr. Hildesheim, 1963]), 1:299. For an English translation, see *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor: Byzantine and Near Eastern History, AD 284–813*, trans. C. Mango and R. Scott (Oxford, 1997), 428. See also Janin, *Les églises et les monastères*, 204.

20 John VI Kantakouzenos, *Historiarum Libri IV*, ed. L. Schopen, 3 vols., CSHB (Bonn, 1828–32), 1:339: “Υπὸ δὲ τὸν αὐτὸν χρόνον ὁ βασιλεὺς εἰς Κύζικον ἐπεραιώθη, ἅμα μὲν τὴν τῆς Θεομήτορος ἀχειροποίητον εἰκόνα, ἣ πρὸς τὸν ἐν Ὑρτακίῳ ναὸν ἦν, προσκυνήσων. . .” See also Janin, *Les églises et les monastères*, 204. To follow the geographical description of this section, see the map at *ibid.*, 192.

21 *Acta et diplomata graeca medii aevi sacra et profana*, ed. F. Miklosich and J. Müller, 6 vols. (Vienna, 1860–90 [repr. Athens, 1960]), 2:110: “παραδίδωσι δὲ αὐτῷ ἡ μετρίότης ἡμῶν καὶ τὰ ἐν τῷ Ὑρτακίῳ εὕρισκόμενα πατριαρχικὰ δίκαια, ἡγουν τὰ δύο προσκυνήματα, τό τε τῆς πανυπεράγνου μου δεσποίνης καὶ Θεομήτορος τῆς Ἀχειροποίητου. . .” See also Janin, *Les églises et les monastères*, 204 (gives erroneous page number for the Miklosich and Müller edition).

22 R. Bousquet, “L’affaire de Péramos,” *EO* 6 (1903): 402–3; Hasluck, *Cyzicus*, 52–53; T. Xanthopoulos, “L’image de la Vierge de Péramos,” *EO* 14 (1911): 220; Mango and Ševčenko, “Some Churches and Monasteries,” 267; Janin, *Les églises et les monastères*, 204; and C. Konstantinide, “Ἡ Ἀχειροποίητος-Φανερωμένη τῶν Πρώτων Παλαιολόγων,” *Δελτ. Χριστ. Αρχ. Έτ.*, ser. 4, 24 (2003): 96.

23 Bousquet, “L’affaire de Péramos,” 402–3; Hasluck, *Cyzicus*, 52–53; Xanthopoulos, “L’image de la Vierge de Péramos,” 217–20; K. Makres, “Τὰ Χωριά καὶ τὰ Μοναστήρια τῆς Κυζικηνῆς Χερσοννήσου,” *Μικρασιατικά Χρονικά* 8 (1959): 165–72 (published posthumously; the text was written in 1901); Janin, *Les églises et les monastères*, 204; and Konstantinide, “Ἡ Ἀχειροποίητος-Φανερωμένη,” 96–97.

24 G. Soteriou, *Κειμήλια τοῦ Οἰκουμενικοῦ Πατριαρχείου* (Athens, 1937), 26, pl. 8; Janin, *Les églises et les monastères*, 204; *The Oecumenical Patriarchate: The Great Church of Christ*, ed. A. Paliouras (Geneva, 1989), 97, fig. 73; S. Demetrakopoulos, *Ὁ Πατριαρχικὸς Οἶκος καὶ Ναὸς τοῦ Φαναρίου* (Athens, 1996), 128 (where the photograph is reversed) and 129; A. Kariotoglou, *Constantinople, the Cathedral City*, vol. 1, *Constantinople, the Patriarchal Cathedrals* (Alimos, 1996), 128; and Konstantinide, “Ἡ Ἀχειροποίητος-Φανερωμένη,” 97.

25 Xanthopoulos, “L’image de la Vierge de Péramos,” 220; Janin, *Les églises et les monastères*, 204; and Konstantinide, “Ἡ Ἀχειροποίητος-Φανερωμένη,” 97.



shoreline of the isthmus of Kyzikos.<sup>26</sup> At the end of the nineteenth century this icon was transferred to the metropolitan church of Artake. Konstantinos Makres, based upon the opinion of Andreas Mordtmann, believed this icon to be of the fourth century and considered it to be the Acheiropoietos Marian icon to which Andonikos III made his pilgrimage.<sup>27</sup> Manuel Gedeon, however, concluded that it definitely did not belong to the Herakleian period or to that of Andronikos Palaiologos's pilgrimage to Artake, but rather to a later, unspecified time.<sup>28</sup>

The only certainty regarding the known origin of the icons of the Theotokos Acheiropoietos and that from the Theotokos Lebenistra monastery is that the

ancient sanctuary of the Theotokos is not found within the walls of Artake nor even in the city of Kyzikos. The site of the Theotokos Acheiropoietos Phaneromene seems to be the most ancient and principal shrine.<sup>29</sup>

As noted above, the inscription accompanying the image of the Virgin Nursing on the seals of Metropolitan Romanos is unique. The inscription is not an exact quotation of Scripture although it is similar to a few verses from the Psalms.<sup>30</sup> Nor is the exact text found in the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*.<sup>31</sup> The inscription of the specimen published in 1963 by Vitalien Laurent was misread.<sup>32</sup> But in the review of Laurent's three-volume corpus of seals from the ecclesiastical administration, Werner Seibt offered a different reading (closer to the now-corrected reading taken from the Zacos collection) and suggested that the inscription is close to that of Joel 2:27.<sup>33</sup> (Yet Joel 2:27 is no closer to the seal's inscription than the Psalm verses.) In his review, Seibt also noted that the exact verb form, according to his reading, *καταισχυνθήσεται* (he *will* not be put to shame) is found in Romans 9:33. And he observed that the seal's inscription is related to that found on the reverse of a miliaresion whose obverse bears a bust image of the Virgin holding a medallion of the Christ Child. The inscription on the miliaresion's reverse reads *Μήτηρ Θεοῦ δεδοξασμένη ὁ εἰς σὲ ἐλπίζων οὐκ ἀποτυγχάνει* (Mother of God, who has been glorified, whosoever hopes in you does not fail). The miliaresion has recently been reassigned by Brigitte Pitarakis and Cécile Morrisson to the later years of Basil II's reign (976–1025), preferably 1000–1020.<sup>34</sup> Pitarakis

26 K. Makres, "Κυζικηνὴ Χερσόνησος," *Μικρασιατικά Χρονικά* 6 (1955): 158–59 (written in 1901, published posthumously); Makres, "Τὰ Χωρὶὰ καὶ τὰ Μοναστήρια," 148; and Janin, *Les églises et les monastères*, 203 and 204.

27 Makres, "Κυζικηνὴ Χερσόνησος," 153 and Janin, *Les églises et les monastères*, 203–4.

28 M. Gedeon, "Εἰκόνες παλαιαί," *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἀληθεία* 31 (1911): 153–55. See also the reference to this article by Xanthopoulos, "L'image de la Vierge de Pérámos," 219, n. 1 and Janin, *Les églises et les monastères*, 203–4. Unlike the Virgin Phaneromene that was transferred to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the literature does not mention the subsequent history of the Virgin Lebentistra. There is, however, another icon of the Virgin and Child in the collection of the Ecumenical Patriarchate known as the Virgin of Artake. This icon received a short description in *Oecumenical Patriarchate*, 97, but no photograph is included. It is described as being 0.55 m × 0.68 m, as having been brought from Artake "in older times," as covered with a silver and gold revetment, and as having crowned figures with faces that are completely ruined. Makres, "Κυζικηνὴ Χερσόνησος," 152, gave the dimensions of the icon as 0.99 m × 0.79 m and stated that the wood was greatly damaged by worms. Gedeon, "Εἰκόνες παλαιαί," 153, offers no dimensions but states that the icon has a silver gilded revetment; that the Virgin is crowned, with the center possessing a larger stone; and that it suffers from worm damage. Recently A. Papas, "The Holy Icon of the Virgin Mary of Palaion Banion," in *Legacy of Achievement: Metropolitan Methodios of Boston, Festal Volume on the 25th Anniversary of His Consecration to the Episcopate*, ed. G. Dragas (Boston, 2008), 296–304, studied this second Marian icon at the Patriarchate referred to as "of Artake." He describes the history of this icon, also known as the Virgin Mary of the *Palaion Banion*, or of the Old Navy Yard, and suggests that the name Artake was given since this second icon was placed adjacent to the Virgin Phaneromene in the Patriarchal church of St. George. Papas also cites literature that places the icon in Constantinople at least as early as 1873. This icon too has a silver revetment, and both the Virgin and Christ Child are crowned. He gives the icon's dimensions as 0.72 m × 0.57 m and notes that almost all of the painted portions of the figures are gone and that the restoration work suggests a seventeenth-century date for the icon.

29 Janin, *Les églises et les monastères*, 204–5.

30 Pss. 21 (22):5; 24 (25):3, 20; and 70 (71):1.

31 Accessed 1 February 2010.

32 Laurent, *Corpus*, 5.1, no. 353, read the inscription as: Κύριε ὁ Θεός μου, ὁ εἰς σὲ ἐλπίζων οὐκ ἀποτυγχάνει (O Lord my God, whosoever hopes in you does not fail).

33 W. Seibt, review of Laurent, *Corpus* 5.1–3, *BSI* 35 (1974): 77, who offered the following reading: Κύριε ὁ Θεός μου, ὁ εἰς σὲ ἐλπίζων οὐ καταισχυνθήσεται οὐκέτι.

34 B. Pitarakis and C. Morrisson, "Miliarsion anonyme avec la Vierge Nikopoios: une nouvelle datation," *Bulletin de la Société française de numismatique* 56, no. 3 (2001): 33–36, who discuss the literature dealing with previous alternate datings for the miliarsion. I wish to thank Cécile Morrisson for providing me with a copy of this article. In the earlier literature, Philip Grierson, "A Misattributed *Miliarsion* of Basil II," *ZRVI* 8, no. 1 (1963): 111–16, assigned the piece to 989 as a commemoration of Basil II's victory in the battle of Abydos which was attributed to a miraculous

and Morrisson note the existence of a cameo, assigned to the end of the tenth to the beginning of the eleventh century, that bears a similar verse on the reverse addressed to a figure of Christ on the obverse.<sup>35</sup>

The Romans verse, noted by Seibt, may assist in interpreting the relationship between the seal's inscription and image. Romans 9:33 reads: *καθώς γέγραπται· ἰδοὺ τίθημι ἐν Σιών λίθον προσκόμματος καὶ πέτραν σκανδάλου, καὶ ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ' αὐτῷ οὐ καταισχυνθήσεται* (As it is written, "Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling stone and a rock of offense: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be shamed"). Later in the same epistle, Paul employs a similar phrase in expressing the salvific hope in Christ for the believer: *λέγει γὰρ ἡ γραφή· πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ' αὐτῷ οὐ καταισχυνθήσεται* (For the Scripture saith, "Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed") (Romans 10:11). In both instances, the author of the epistle is conflating two verses from the Old Testament related to the believer's faithfulness to the Lord: Isaiah 8:14: *καὶ ἐὰν ἐπ' αὐτῷ πεποιθῶς ᾖς, ἔσται σοι εἰς ἀγίασμα, καὶ οὐχ ὡς λίθου προσκόμματος συναντήσεσθε αὐτῷ οὐδὲ ὡς πέτρας πτώματι* (And if thou shalt trust in him, he shall be to thee for a sanctuary; and ye shall not come against him as against a stumbling stone, neither as against the falling of a rock) and 28:16: *Ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἐμβαλῶ εἰς τὰ θεμέλια Σιών λίθον πολυτελὴ ἐκλεκτὸν ἀκρογωνιαίον*

intervention of the Virgin; C. Morrisson, *Catalogue des monnaies byzantines de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1970), 583–84, 610 and pl. 83, who at the time of her publication acknowledged and accepted Grierson's dating of 989; and W. Seibt, "Der Bildtypus der Theotokos Nikopoios: Zur Ikonographie der Gottesmutter-Ikone, die 1030/31 in der Blachernenkirche wiederaufgefunden wurde," *Byzantina* 13, no. 1 (1985): 549–64, who assigned the miliaresion to the year 1040 suggesting that it was issued to commemorate Michael IV's proclamation of his nephew, Michael V, *caesar* in the church of the Virgin *Blachernai*. There is more discussion of this miliaresion in A. Weyl Carr, "Court Culture and Cult Icons in Middle Byzantine Constantinople," in *Byzantine Court Culture from 829 to 1204*, ed. H. Maguire (Washington, D.C., 1997), 89–90, fig. 13.

35 Pitarakis and Morrisson, "Miliarèsion anonyme," 33. For the cameo, see *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A. D. 843–1261*, ed. H. Evans and W. Wixom (New York, 1997), no. 128, where the inscription is provided: Χ(ριστ)Ε Ο Θ(ε)C Ο ΕΙC CΕ ΕΛΠΙΖΩΝ ΟΥΚ ΑΠΟΤΥΓΧΑΝΕΙ (Ο Christ God, whosoever hopes in you does not fail). Weyl Carr, "Court Culture and Cult Icons," 89, notes that, according to the emperor Constantine VII, the inscription Χριστὸς ὁ Θεὸς, ὁ εἰς σὲ ἐλπίζων οὐκ ἀποτυγχάνει ποτέ was on the Mandyliion, which bore Christ's portrait. For the text of Constantine VII, see PG 113:437.

ἐντιμον εἰς τὰ θεμέλια αὐτῆς, καὶ ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ' αὐτῷ οὐ μὴ καταισχυνθῇ (Behold, I lay for the foundations of Sion a costly stone, a choice, a corner-stone, a precious stone, for its foundations; and he that believes on him shall by no means be ashamed). Again in I Peter 2:4–8, the author uses the metaphor of Christ as the living stone whom believers will build upon but who will cause unbelievers to stumble, and verse 2:6 again quotes Isaiah 28:16. I Peter 2:7 is also the first part of Psalm 117 (118):22, a verse quoted by Christ in Matthew 21:42 as a self-referential fulfillment of the psalm.

The living stone was long considered in Byzantium to be a type of Christ and the Incarnation from the Virgin. In his commentary on Isaiah 28:16, Cyril of Alexandria (ca. 376–ca. 444) writes that the costly, chosen, precious stone refers to the Lord Jesus Christ, that he is the foundation of the spiritual Sion, the Church, and whosoever believes in him will not be ashamed but be free of the Law and will embrace grace and be justified in Christ.<sup>36</sup> The same Church Father, when commenting on Joel 2:27, a similar verse, also understood this verse as a prophecy of the Incarnation and the certain hope this brings for eternal life.<sup>37</sup> In his commentary on I Peter 2:6, which quotes Isaiah 28:16, Cyril offers the same interpretation as for his exegesis of Isaiah's text—that Jesus Christ is this stone and those who believe will not be put to shame.<sup>38</sup> John Chrysostom (340s–407), in his commentary on I Peter 2:6–8, likewise declares that the precious stone in the

36 Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentarius in Isaiam Prophetam* (PG 70:632–33): "Λίθον μὲν οὖν ἐκλεκτόν, πολυτελὴ καὶ ἐντιμον, τὸν Κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἀποκαλεῖ . . . καὶ ἀκλόνητος ὑποβάθρα γέγονε τῇ νοητῇ Σιών, τοῦτ' ἔστι, τῇ Ἐκκλησίᾳ . . . Ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ' αὐτῷ οὐ μὴ καταισχυνθῇ. Αναπείθει δὲ διὰ τούτου τῆς τοῦ νόμου δυσαρχείας ἀπολύσασθαι τὸν αὐχένα, καὶ τῆς ἀνοήτου, καὶ ἀδρανοῦς ἀποφοιτῆσαι σκιᾶς, ἀνελέσθαι δὲ μᾶλλον τὴν διὰ πίστεως χάριν, καὶ τὴν ἐν Χριστῷ δικαίωσιν ἀρπάσαι πόνον ἔχουσαν οὐδένα." For an English translation, see Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on Isaiah*, 3 vols., trans. R. C. Hill (Brookline, MA, 2008), 2:180–81.

37 Cyril of Alexandria, *In Joelem Prophetam Commentarius* (PG 71:376): "Ἐπαγγέλλεται σαφῶς τῆς μετὰ σαρκὸς οἰκονομίας τὸν τρόπον, καὶ ὅτι τοῖς ἐπὶ γῆς συνδιαίτησεται κενώσας ἑαυτὸν, καὶ γενόμενος καθ' ὑμᾶς, τοῦτέστιν, ἄνθρωπος . . . Τοιγάρτοι καὶ πεπλουτήκαμεν, ὡς ἐν ἐλπίδι βεβαίᾳ ζῶντες, καὶ δόξῃ τῇ εἰς μακράκινα βίον, ἐν ἀγιασμῷ καὶ ὁσιότητι πολιτείας."

38 Cyril of Alexandria, *Fragmenta in Epistolam I B. Petri* (PG 74:1013).

prophecy—that is, the foundation of the spiritual Sion and the cause for unbelievers to stumble—is Christ.<sup>39</sup>

Later, in the eleventh century and closer to the time of our seal, the archbishop Theophylaktos of Bulgaria (c. 1088/89–after 1126) echoed a similar interpretation in his commentary on Romans 9:33: “For they stumbled on the stone of stumbling, as it is written, ‘Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling stone and rock of offense and whosoever believeth on him shall not be put to shame.’ The one who stumbles gaps at many different things and, not being attentive to things in front of him, stumbles. And thus did the Jews, gaping at the law, stumble at Christ; that is, they did not believe. The stumbling stone and rock of offence, from the end and result of their unbelief, was named Christ.”<sup>40</sup>

The exegesis of Theophylaktos on I Peter 2:1–6 proves most helpful in linking the inscription and image found on our seal. The hierarch writes, essentially quoting I Peter 2:1–6 in full:

Therefore, having set aside every evil, all guile, hypocrisy, jealousy and all slander, you should yearn, as new-born infants, for the guileless, rational milk, so that with it, you will increase in salvation; if indeed you have tasted that Christ is the Lord. Drawing near to him, the living stone, who having been rejected by men, was chosen and precious before God. And as living stones you should be built up, as a spiritual house, a sacred priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For the Scriptures say, “Behold, I place in Sion a cornerstone, chosen and precious, and

whosoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”<sup>41</sup>

Slightly further in this portion of the commentary, Theophylaktos again writes:

Surely, on account of this, they say, having been purified from all these things, approach “as new-born infants,” for of such things is the kingdom revealed by the Lord [cf. Matthew 18:3, Mark 10:14, Luke 18:16], and, fed by a guileless word, “increase in the measure of age of the fullness of Christ” [Ephesians 4:13]. “For having tasted”: surely this is through taking hold of what is according to the Gospel . . . “Taste” therefore the goodness of the Lord, and those demonstrating the good of the goodness to each other are setting themselves up as to “the living stone,” “the cornerstone, the one rejected on one hand by men, but on the other hand, precious and chosen by God.”<sup>42</sup>

The motif of Christ as the stumbling stone who then becomes the cornerstone for the spiritual house is reiterated in Theophylaktos’s elucidation of verses 7–8 in his commentary on I Peter 2.<sup>43</sup>

Other eleventh-century texts further support the correspondence between the image and inscription on our seal. In the liturgical *typikon* of the Theotokos

39 John Chrysostom, *Fragmenta in Primam S. Petri Epistolam* (PG 64:1053–56): “Τοῦτο τὸ ῥητὸν εἰς τὸν Χριστὸν ἀναφέρεται· καὶ γὰρ αὐτὸς ἐν Εὐαγγελίοις ταύτην παράγει τὴν προφητείαν λέγων . . .”

40 Theophylaktos of Bulgaria, *Commentarius in Epistolam ad Romanos* (PG 124:473): “Προσέκυψαν γὰρ τῷ λίθῳ τοῦ προσκόμματος, καθὼς γέγραπται· Ἰδοὺ τίθημι ἐν Σιών λίθον προσκόμματος, καὶ πέτραν σκανδάλου καὶ πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ’ αὐτῷ, οὐ καταισχυνθήσεται· Ὁ προσκόπτων, ἐκ τοῦ πρὸς ἕτερα κεχηγνέναι, καὶ μὴ προσέχειν τοῖς ἐμπροσθεν, προσκόπτει. Καὶ οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι οὖν ἐκ τοῦ πρὸς τὸν νόμον κεχηγνέναι προσέκοψαν τῷ Χριστῷ, τοὔτεστιν, ἠπίστησαν. Λίθος δὲ προσκόμματος, καὶ πέτρα σκανδάλου, ἀπὸ τοῦ τέλους καὶ τῆς ἐκβάσεως τῶν ἀπιστησάντων ὠνόμασται ὁ Χριστὸς.” I wish to thank the Rev. Fr. Mark Arey, who read my translation of this text, and those of the following two footnotes, and offered some suggestions to refine the translation.

41 Theophylaktos of Bulgaria, *Expositio in Epistolam Primam S. Petri* (PG 125:1205): “Ἀποθέμενοι οὖν πᾶσαν κακίαν, καὶ πάντα δόλον, καὶ ὑποκρίσεις, καὶ φθόνους, καὶ πάσας καταλαλίαν, ὡς ἀρτιγέννητα βρέφη, τὸ λογικὸν ἄδολον γάλα ἐπιποθήσατε, ἵνα ἐν αὐτῷ αὐξηθῇτε εἰς σωτηρίαν· εἴπερ ἐγεύσασθε ὅτι Χριστὸς ὁ Κύριος. Πρὸς δὲ προσερχόμενοι λίθον ζῶντα, ὑπὸ ἀνθρώπων μὲν ἀποδοκιμασμένον, παρὰ δὲ Θεῷ ἐκλεκτὸν, ἐντιμον, καὶ αὐτοὶ ὡς λίθοι ζῶντες οἰκοδομεῖσθε, οἶκος πνευματικὸς, ἱεράτευμα ἅγιον, ἀνενέγκαι πνευματικὰς θυσίας, εὐπροσδέκτους τῷ Θεῷ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. Διότι περιέχει ἐν τῇ Γραφῇ· Ἰδοὺ τίθημι ἐν Σιών λίθον ἀκρογωνιαίον, ἐκλεκτὸν, ἐντιμον· καὶ ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ’ αὐτῷ, οὐ μὴ καταισχυνθῇ.”

42 Ibid., 1208: “Δίᾳ τοι τοῦτο, φησί, τούτων ἀπάντων καθαρεύσαντες, ὡς ἀρτιγέννητα βρέφη πρόσιτε (τῶν γὰρ τοιούτων εἶναι τὴν βασιλείαν ὁ Κύριος ἀπεφήνατο), καὶ τῷ ἀδόλῳ λόγῳ τρεφόμενοι αὐξεσθε εἰς μέτρον ἡλικίας τοῦ πληρώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ. Ἐυσάμενοι γὰρ, τοῦτ’ ἐστὶ διὰ μεταχειρίσεως τῶν κατὰ τὸ Εὐαγγέλιον . . . Ἐυσάμενοι τοίνυν τῆς τοῦ Κυρίου χρηστότητος, καὶ αὐτοὶ τὸ τῆς χρηστότητος ἀγαθὸν εἰς ἀλλήλους ἐπιδεικνύμενοι, καὶ ὡς ‘λίθῳ ζῶντι’ ἑαυτοὺς ἀναθέμενοι τῷ ἀκρογωνίῳ, τῷ ἀποδοκιμασθέντι μὲν ὑπὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων, παρὰ δὲ Θεῷ ἐντίμῳ καὶ ἐκλεκτῷ.”

43 Ibid., 1209.



*Evergetis* monastery in Constantinople, the rubrics specify certain patristic homilies for the feasts of the Nativity of Christ and of the Annunciation, two feasts that focus on the reality of the Incarnation. For the matins of the forefeast of the Nativity on 24 December, the typikon calls for the reading of a homily attributed to Athanasios of Alexandria concerning the enrollment of Mary and Joseph in the census in Bethlehem.<sup>44</sup> In the first quarter of the homily there are several references to the nursing of Christ and the miraculous breasts of the Virgin: μαζὸς ἀγιόριζος (a breast of holy root); γάλα ξενορρύς (milk that strangely flows); θηλή τῆς φυσικῆς νομῆς ἀλλοτρία (a nipple that is alien to natural feeding).<sup>45</sup> A little further in the text, one reads that the infant Christ who can release the streams of water in nature is at the same time given the breast (ὁ πηγὰς ἀπολύων μαζὸν ἐδανείζετο)<sup>46</sup> and that he suckled the breast so that the milk of grace may abound, the grace which flowed from his own side (Μαζὸν εἰλκυσεν ἵνα τὸ γάλα τῆς χάριτος βρύσῃ, ὅπερ ἐκ τῆς οἰκείας πλευρᾶς ἀνέβλυσε), for milk is nothing else than whitened blood (γάλα γὰρ οὐδὲν ἑτερόν ἐστιν ἢ αἷμα λευκανθέν).<sup>47</sup> Toward the end of the homily, at the point of describing Joseph's wonder at the Virgin Birth, the author again refers to the miraculous breasts of the Mother of God by stating that at that moment Joseph understood that when the Virgin gave the breast she did not endure any loss of blood (τότε ἔγνω, ὅτι μαζὸν ἐπέδωκε, καὶ φλεβοσυσλίαν οὐκ ὑπέμεινε); and returning to the type of the uncut rock, the homilist presents the Virgin as the sharply cut flinty rock (cf. Deuteronomy

8:15) that was offering the nipple to Christ the "noetic" (intelligible) rock (τότε ἔγνω, ὅτι θηλὴν παρείχεν ἡ ἀκρότομος πέτρα τῇ νοητῇ πέτρᾳ).<sup>48</sup>

For the celebration of matins on Christmas Day, the same typikon stipulates that the homily *A Strange and Wondrous Mystery*, attributed to John Chrysostom, be read.<sup>49</sup> In the early part of this text, the author states that virgins came to worship the newborn Child, the Child of a Virgin, because he is the creator of milk and breasts, breasts that create spontaneously flowing streams, and that the newborn Christ took food from the Virgin Mother of the Child (αἱ παρθέναι τὸ τῆς παρθένου παιδίον, ὅτι πῶς ὁ γάλακτος καὶ μαζῶν δημιουργὸς τὰς πηγὰς μαζῶν αὐτόματα ρεῖθρα φέρεσθαι ποιῶν, παρὰ μητρὸς παρθένου παιδίου τροφὴν ἔλαβε).<sup>50</sup>

For the feast of the Annunciation, the celebration of the beginning of the Incarnation, the Theotokos *Evergetis* typikon stipulates for the matins service a reading of a homily by Andrew of Crete.<sup>51</sup> In this homily, Andrew refers to the Old Testament prefigurations of the Virgin and includes in this litany the vision of Daniel: she is the great mountain that Daniel, the man of zeal, saw (ἦν "ὄρος ἑώρα μέγα" Δανιήλ, ὁ τῶν ἐπιθυμιῶν ἀνήρ).<sup>52</sup> Further in the homily, Andrew writes that the Holy Spirit was the means of the divine conception and that the Spirit created the temple of the Virgin's body "uncut by human hands" (Daniel 2:45) and that the womb of the Virgin, which was a desert of the passions, had been purified of every material thing and passionate attachment (ἄκαθ' ὃν ἀχειροτμήτως τὸν ναὸν τοῦ σώματος ἐν τῇ κατὰ τὴν ἔρημον τῶν παθῶν τῆς παρθένου νηδύϊ πάσης προσύλου καθαρευούσης μετασίας καὶ προσπαθείας, ὡς δῆλον ἐκ τῶν ἐξῆς).<sup>53</sup> Furthermore, it should be noted here, in a homily on the Annunciation written by Michael Psellos, a contemporary of and correspondent with Romanos, the philosopher-monk also included the Old Testament reference to the Virgin as

44 *The Synaxarion of the Monastery of the Theotokos Evergetis*, 3 vols., ed. R. Jordan, BBT 6.5–7 (Belfast, 2000–2007), 1:320–21.

45 PG 28:944–45, where the text is identified as a dubious work of Athanasios. In *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, ed. G. Lampe (Oxford, 1995), xlii, the text is attributed to the sixth-century author Timothy of Antioch.

46 PG 28:945.

47 Ibid., 945–48. This is a topos in ancient medical theory, repeated by patristic writers: e.g., D. Krueger, *Writing and Holiness: The Practice of Authorship in the Early Christian East* (Philadelphia, 2004), 145–46, citing Clement of Alexandria. I wish to thank Leslie MacCoull for bringing this study to my attention. For a classical example of this topos, see Hippokrates, *Glands*, 16: *Hippokrates*, trans. P. Potter, Loeb Classical Library 8 (Cambridge, MA, 1995), 122–23. For Clement of Alexandria's text, see *Paidagogos*, 1.6.39.2 and 39.5–40.1, ed. H.-I. Marrou and trans. M. Harl, SC 70 (Paris, 1960), 182–83. I thank one of the anonymous readers for these latter two references.

48 Ibid., 957. I wish to thank the Rev. Dr. George Dragas for his elucidative comments concerning the phrase καὶ φλεβοσυσλίαν οὐκ ὑπέμεινε. In *Patristic Greek Lexicon*, 1485, φλεβοσυσλία is defined as "a drawing from the veins."

49 *Synaxarion of the Monastery of the Theotokos Evergetis*, 1:335.

50 *In Salvatoris Nostri Jesu Christi Nativitatem Oratio* (PG 56:387).

51 *Synaxarion of the Monastery of the Theotokos Evergetis*, 2:35.

52 PG 97:900. Daniel 2:35 and 45 are frequent Marian images of the Incarnation (see below).

53 Ibid., 909.

the curdled mountain of Psalm 67 (68):16–17 (ἀὐτὴ ὄρος τετυρωμένον, ὄρος κατάσκιον).<sup>54</sup> These texts with their references to the nursing of Christ and the uncut stone from the mountain bear out two major themes: the reality of the Incarnation and the saving hope in this Incarnation. These themes are echoed in the conjunction of our seal's text and image.

There are further examples of visual references that link the motif of the stone and Sion with that of the Virgin and Child as a visualization of the fulfilled promise of the Incarnation. The marginal psalters provide several examples of such images. Psalm 67 (68):16–17 reads, "The mountain of God is a butter mountain, a curdled mountain, a butter mountain. Why suppose ye that there be other curdled mountains? This is the mountain wherein God is pleased to dwell, yea, for the Lord will dwell therein to the end." In the mid-ninth-century Khludov Psalter, the verse is accompanied by an image of a mountain on top of which is a medallion with a bust of the Virgin and Child while below to the right is David, the composer of the psalm, and to the left the figure of Daniel reclining in a bed. Accompanying Daniel is an inscription: ΔΑΝΙΗΛ ΠΡΟΦΗΤΕΥΕΙ ΕΙΣ ΤΟ ΟΡΟΣ ΤΟ ΜΕΓΑ (Daniel prophesies about the great mountain). Between these two figures at the bottom of the mountain is a large stone, identified with the inscription ΛΙΘΟΣ, which has broken an idol to pieces.<sup>55</sup> The figure of Daniel is included in this miniature due to his prophecy concerning the dream of Nebuchadnezzar in which the stone, cut from a mountain but not by hands, smashes the idol set up by Nebuchadnezzar, and subsequently the stone becomes a great mountain that filled the earth (Daniel 2:31–36). In patristic literature, Daniel's prophecy was understood as a typology of the birth of Christ from the Virgin.<sup>56</sup> The prophecy is also read

during the celebration of the great vespers for the feast of the Nativity of Christ for 25 December,<sup>57</sup> and the reference to the uncut mountain is included in hymns of the *lite* of great vespers and matins for the feast of the Annunciation on 25 March, marking the beginning of the Incarnation.<sup>58</sup> In John of Damaskos's *Homily on the Dormition of the Virgin*, the Church Father interprets the cornerstone of Isaiah 28:16 as Christ, as does the New Testament, and combines this interpretation with the prophecy of Daniel.<sup>59</sup> A similar image appears in the ninth-century Pantokrator Psalter for Psalm 67 (68):16–17, except here no image of the Virgin and Child is present but the stone that has crushed the idol is identified as ΛΙΘΟΣ ΑΧΕΙΡΟΤΜΗΤΟΣ (the stone cut without hands).<sup>60</sup> In the Bristol Psalter of ca. 1000 (Fig. 6), the image for Psalm 67 (68):16–17 is very similar to that of the Pantokrator Psalter except there are more inscriptions: τὸ ὄρος ἐξ οὗ ἐτμήθη ὁ λίθος ἄνευ χειρῶν (the mountain from which the stone has been cut without hands); λίθος ὁ πατάξ(ας) τὴν εἰκόνα (the stone striking the image); Δα(υὶ)δ (David); ὁ Δανιὴλ βλέπων τὴν ὄρασιν τῆς εἰκόνης τῆς λεπτυνθεῖσ(ης) ὑπὸ τοῦ λίθου (Daniel looking at the vision of the image smashed to pieces by the stone); and ὄρος ἐστὶν ἡ Θε(εοτό)κος. λίθος δὲ ὁ Χ(ριστός) (the mountain is the Theotokos, the stone is Christ).<sup>61</sup> In the Theodore Psalter of 1066, Psalm 67 (68):16 is provided with a comparable miniature: at the top of the mountain is a medallion with the bust of the Virgin and Child while below are David and Daniel. At the bottom of the mountain is the stone that has smashed the idol. Above the figure of Daniel is

54 *Michaelis Pselli Scripta Minora*, ed. E. Kurtz and F. Drexler, 2 vols. (Milan, 1936–41), 1:88.

55 *Salterio Chludov*, State Historical Museum of Moscow (Madrid, 2006), fol. 64r. See also K. Corrigan, *Visual Polemics in the Ninth-Century Byzantine Psalters* (Cambridge, 1992), 37–38, fig. 50 and S. Ćurčić, "Representations of Towers in Byzantine Art: The Question of Meaning," in *Byzantine Art: Recent Studies: Essays in Honor of Lois Drewer*, ed. C. Hourihane (Princeton, 2009), 14–15, fig. 11.

56 John Chrysostom, *Homily on Daniel* (PG 56:208); Andrew of Crete, *On the Birth of the Holy Theotokos* (PG 97:869); and John of Damaskos, *On the Nativity of the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin*

*Mary* (PG 96:669). See also C. Walter, "Christological Themes in Byzantine Marginal Psalters from the Ninth to the Eleventh Century," *REB* 44 (1986): 276 and Corrigan, *Visual Polemics*, 38–39.

57 *Μηναῖον τοῦ Δεκεμβρίου* (Athens, 1993), 497–98. For an English translation, see *The Festal Menaion*, ed. Mother Mary and K. Ware (London, 1969), 258–59.

58 *Μηναῖον τοῦ Μαρτίου* (Athens, 1992), 252, 263 and 264. For an English translation, see *Festal Menaion*, 443, 458 and 459.

59 John of Damaskos, *Homily on the Dormition* (PG 96:714). See also Corrigan, *Visual Polemics*, 167, n. 63.

60 S. Dufrenne, *L'illustration des psautiers grecs du Moyen âge*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1966), 27, pl. 11, fol. 83v. See also Corrigan, *Visual Polemics*, 37–40, fig. 51.

61 Dufrenne, *L'illustration*, 60, pl. 53, fol. 105v. See also Corrigan, *Visual Polemics*, 38–39, fig. 52.

an inscription: ὁ Δανιὴλ προφητεύει εἰς τὸ ὄρος (Daniel prophesies about the mountain).<sup>62</sup>

The marginal psalters provide other examples of images of the Virgin that are associated with mountains and Sion, that is to say, terms that are associated in the Old Testament verses cited above concerning the chosen stone and city, which are interpreted as types of the Incarnation. In the Khludov Psalter, a bust of the Virgin and Child before the entrance to a church is placed at the top of a mountain for Psalm 77 (78):68: "And He chose the tribe of Judah, Mount Sion which He loved." Next to the figure of the Virgin appears the inscription: Ἡ ΑΓΙΑ ΚΙΩΝ (Holy Sion).<sup>63</sup> Later, the Theodore Psalter of 1066 provides a very similar image to the identical verse (Fig. 7).<sup>64</sup>

Psalm 86(87):5 reads: "A man will say: Mother Sion; and: That man was born in her; and: The Most High Himself hath founded her."<sup>65</sup> In the Khludov Psalter, the verse is accompanied by an image of a high wall enclosing the church of Holy Sion, identified by inscription. In front of the wall is the figure of David pointing to an icon of the bust of the Virgin and Child and above David is the inscription "David prophesies."<sup>66</sup> Again, similar images appear with this verse in the Pantokrator Psalter<sup>67</sup> and in the Theodore Psalter.<sup>68</sup>

The textual and visual material presented above clearly testifies to the longstanding and close association of the motif of the stone in both the Old and New Testaments, the inscription or phrase "Κύριε ὁ Θεός μου, ὁ εἰς σὲ ἐλπίζων οὐ καταισχύνεται (Lord, my God, whosoever hopes in you is not put to shame)," and its comparable variants, with that of the fulfillment of the Incarnation through the Virgin, even the Virgin

nursing with her miraculous breasts. The associations are echoed throughout the exegetical, homiletical, liturgical, and iconographic traditions of the Byzantine church over a great span of time. These allusions were tropes and types that would have been especially familiar to a high-ranking ecclesiastic such as Romanos, the metropolitan of Kyzikos, who, in 1072, participated in the Synod held in the church of St. Alexios in Constantinople, where according to ecclesiastical protocol he ranked fifth among the forty-one metropolitans present.<sup>69</sup> Not only did his position in the upper echelons of the Church's bureaucracy inform Romanos of the rich and interwoven strands of the visual and textual hermeneutical tradition that his seal reflects, but the metropolitan was also a member of the educated elite who would have been well attuned to the complex lexicographic and iconographic subtleties evoked by the text and image for his seal. As noted above, Romanos was a friend of Michael Psellos, the celebrated eleventh-century Byzantine savant, with whom he enjoyed correspondence.<sup>70</sup> From these letters one learns that Romanos was a celebrated figure and also a teacher in the capital.<sup>71</sup> This rarified cultural world would have offered Romanos the context to create the unique interplay of text and image on his seal. The seal of Romanos provides another example of how, just as in the tradition of Byzantine manuscript illumination, images were carefully selected to "construct and authorize a particular interpretation of the words that they accompany, and in so doing, they shape and guide the reader's understanding of the words."<sup>72</sup>

69 N. Oikonomides, "Un décret synodal inédit du Patriarche Jean VIII Xiphilin," *REB* 18 (1960): 57.

70 There are three surviving letters of Michael Psellos to Romanos, but no letters of Romanos to Michael are known to exist. Psellos's three letters are published as follows: *Michaelis Pselli Scripta Minora*, 2: no. 12; and K. Sathas, *Μεσαιωνική Βιβλιοθήκη*, 7 vols. (Paris, 1872–94), 5: nos. 30 and 178. See also Oikonomides, "Un décret synodal inédit," 63–64 and *PBW*, Michael 61, <http://www.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/id/person/107822> (accessed 1 February 2010). For a more recent discussion of the varied erudition of Michael Psellos, see the collection of articles in *Reading Michael Psellos*, ed. C. Barber and D. Jenkins (Leiden, 2006).

71 *Michaelis Pselli Scripta Minora*, no. 12. According to the *PBW*, Michael 61, <http://db.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/id/person/107822> (accessed 1 February 2010), this letter has been assigned, tentatively, to 1055.

72 L. Brubaker, "Every Cliché in the Book: The Linguistic Turn and the Text-Image Discourse in Byzantine Manuscripts," in *Art and Text in Byzantine Culture*, ed. L. James (Cambridge, 2007), 78.

62 S. Der Nersessian, *L'illustration des psautiers grecs du Moyen âge*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1970), 37, pl. 46, fig. 136.

63 *Salterio Chludov*, fol. 79r. See also Corrigan, *Visual Polemics*, 52, fig. 67 and Ćurčić, "Representations of Towers in Byzantine Art," 15–17, fig. 12.

64 Der Nersessian, *L'illustration*, 42, pl. 63, fig. 174.

65 Translation from Holy Transfiguration Monastery, *The Psalter, according to the Seventy, of St. David, the Prophet and King* (Boston, 1974).

66 *Salterio Chludov*, fol. 86v. See also Corrigan, *Visual Polemics*, 98, fig. 99 and Ćurčić, "Representations of Towers in Byzantine Art," 17–19, fig. 13.

67 Dufrenne, *L'illustration*, 32, pl. 18, fol. 121r. See also Corrigan, *Visual Polemics*, 98, fig. 100.

68 Der Nersessian, *L'illustration*, 44, pl. 69, fig. 191.

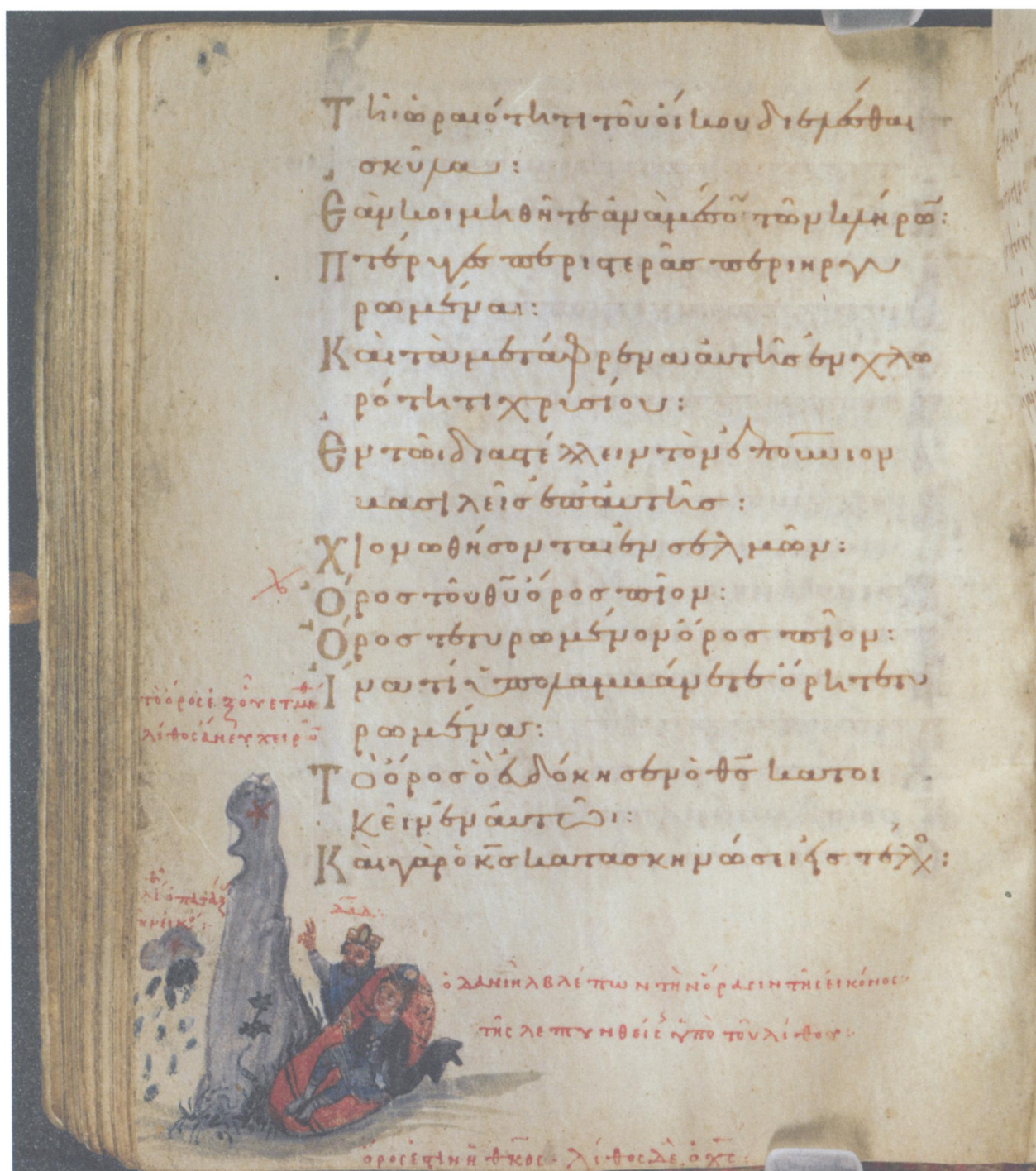


FIG. 6 Daniel and David below the mountain and the uncut rock, London, Brit. Lib. Add. 40731, Bristol Psalter, fol. 105v, Ps. 67:16–17, ca. 1000 (photo courtesy of the British Library)





FIG. 7 The Virgin and Child on top of Holy Sion, London, Brit. Lib. Add. 19,352, Theodore Psalter, fol. 106r, Ps. 77:68, 1066 (photo courtesy of the British Library)

It remains to attempt to understand, if at all possible, why and when Romanos selected this particular image and inscription for the obverse of his seals. It has been shown that in most cases it is impossible to determine a seal owner's motive for the selection of his or her sphragistic imagery.<sup>73</sup> Motives determining such choices are varied and complex. Personal and family names, gender, places of origin, and social position do not offer consistent or statistically high correlations and thus provide only partial explanations. As noted earlier in this paper, bishops and metropolitans, including those of Kyzikos, frequently placed an image of the Virgin on their seals. But what motivated Romanos to choose an image of the Virgin Nursing or Galaktotrophousa? As Cutler has demonstrated in his review of the surviving Byzantine examples of this image and texts that refer to such images, the Galaktotrophousa emphasizes the reality of the dogma of the Incarnation.<sup>74</sup> And as Cutler also observed, although the image and written references to the Virgin Nursing can be traced back to the early Byzantine period, there is a discernible increase in the eleventh and twelfth centuries in the number of visual and textual examples of this motif of a saintly nursing mother, be it the Virgin, Anna, or Elizabeth, all of whom relate to the fulfillment of God's promise in the plan of salvation. These examples parallel the more emotive and "pathetic" trend in visual and literary devotional creations of the Komnenian period that has been observed by various scholars.<sup>75</sup>

73 J. Cotsonis, "Onomastics, Gender, Office and Images on Byzantine Lead Seals: A Means of Investigating Personal Piety," *BMGS* 32, no. 1 (2008): 1–37.

74 Cutler, "Cult of the Galaktotrophousa" (n. 5 above), 337–39 and 343.

75 Ibid., 343. For discussion on the increased emotive aspects characteristic of religious art and texts of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, see A. Kazhdan and A. Epstein, *Change in Byzantine Culture in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Berkeley, 1985), 220–30; H. Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image Before the Era of Art* (Chicago, 1994), 261–96; and A. Cutler and J.-M. Spieser, *Byzance médiévale 700–1204* (Paris, 1996), 276–392, *passim*. For a refinement of this view of a more emotive character of the art of this period and a synchronous increase in the personal use of icons, see R. Cormack, *Painting the Soul: Icons, Death Masks and Shrouds* (London, 1997), 156–66 and *idem*, "Living Painting," in *Rhetoric in Byzantium*, ed. E. Jeffreys (Aldershot, 2003), 235–53; and A. Cutler, "Change and Causation in Later Byzantine Art," in *Byzantium Matures: Choices, Sensitivities, and Modes of Expression (Eleventh to Fifteenth Centuries)*, ed. C. Angelidi (Athens, 2004), 23–52.

The appearance of the Virgin *Galaktotrophousa* on Romanos's seal in the third quarter of the eleventh century parallels not only the contemporary emotive trend but also related doctrinal controversies. As noted above, the Virgin Nursing serves as an emblem of the reality of the Incarnation. The image on our seal and its accompanying inscription proclaimed the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies expressed in the psalms and prophetic literature, much like the visual commentary of the images of the Virgin and Child in the marginal psalters. The texts of these same Old Testament hopes had been paraphrased in the New Testament and commented upon by Church Fathers. The visual and written elements on our seal proclaim Orthodox teachings against eleventh-century dualists, especially the Bogomils, that plagued Byzantium at this time.<sup>76</sup> The Bogomil heresy became such a serious threat that its leader, Basil, was brought before Emperor Alexios I Komnenos and was subsequently tried and burned at the stake in the hippodrome, before ca. 1104.<sup>77</sup> Euthymios Zigabenos, a monk and theologian, was commissioned by the emperor Alexios I to

76 For an introduction to the various dualist heresies, especially that of Byzantine Bogomilism, see M. Angold, *Church and Society in Byzantium under the Comneni, 1081–1261* (Cambridge, 1995), 468–501; J. Hamilton and B. Hamilton, eds., *Christian Dualist Heresies in the Byzantine World, c. 650–c. 1405* (Manchester, 1998), 1–56, esp. 25–56; and J. Sanidopoulos, *The Rise of Bogomilism and Its Penetration into Constantinople: With a Complete Translation of Euthymios Zigabenos' "Concerning Bogomilism"* (Rollingsford, NH, 2011), 33–67. For a more recent discussion of the *Panoplia Dogmatike*, see A. Rigo, "La *Panoplie dogmatique* d'Euthyme Zigabène: Les Pères de l'église, l'empereur et les hérésies du présent," in *Byzantine Theologians: The Systematization of Their Own Doctrine and Their Perception of Foreign Doctrines*, ed. A. Rigo and P. Ermilov (Rome, 2009), 19–32, and Sanidopoulos, *Rise of Bogomilism*, 67–68.

77 For information concerning the trial of Basil the Bogomil, see *Annae Comnenae Alexias*, ed. D. Reinsch and A. Kambylis (Berlin, 2001), 485–93. For an English translation of Anna's account, see Hamilton and Hamilton, *Christian Dualist Heresies*, 175–80. Euthymios Zigabenos, on the other hand, makes only brief references to the trial and execution in his *Dogmatic Panoply*: PG 130:1289, 1317, and 1332. For the date of the trial, depending on the life of Isaac *sebastokrator*, see D. Papachryssanthou, "La date de la mort d'Isaac Comnène, frère d'Alexis I, et de quelques événements contemporains," *REB* 21 (1963): 250–55; D. C. Smythe, "Alexios I and the Heretics: The Account of Anna Komnene's Alexiad," in *Alexios I Komnenos*, ed. M. Mullett and D. Smythe, *BBTT* 4.1 (Belfast, 1996), 232–59, esp. 236 follows Zonaras's implied date. See also Angold, *Church and Society*, 485–87, and Sanidopoulos, *Rise of Bogomilism*, 52–59.



write a refutation of heresies, including the Bogomils, which bears the name *Πανοπλία Δογματική* (*Dogmatic Panoply*).<sup>78</sup> From his text, one learns that the Bogomils, and other dualists, rejected the Old Testament and its preparatory role for the New Testament,<sup>79</sup> the reality of the Incarnation and the Virgin's role in it,<sup>80</sup> and the holy icons.<sup>81</sup> It is also interesting to observe that Euthymios Zigabenos, in his commentary on the New Testament epistles, for the first eight verses of I Peter 2, includes with his own interpretation quotations of earlier Church Fathers, including those of Cyril of Alexandria and John Chrysostom. All the themes now familiar—the stumbling stone, the cornerstone of Sion, and the metaphor of newborns desiring rational and guileless milk—are set forth.<sup>82</sup> In this context, one can understand that Romanos's seal, bearing an image of the Virgin Nursing encircled by an inscription drawing from Old Testament passages quoted repeatedly in the New Testament as being fulfilled in Christ, is a dogmatic visual and textual response to the ongoing dualist heresies then prevalent. In the eleventh century, these dualist heresies had gained a particular stronghold in northwestern Anatolia, in the *theme* of *Opsikion*, in which Kyzikos is located.<sup>83</sup> As a metropolitan, one of

Romanos's major responsibilities would have been to rid his see of erroneous doctrines that would have spiritually endangered his flock and fueled dissent and non-conformity in the life of his metropolis.<sup>84</sup>

The Christological association of the stone was possibly not merely an abstract, long-standing metaphor for Romanos. It is known that during his metropolitanate, in the year 1063, Kyzikos was severely damaged by an earthquake.<sup>85</sup> A year later, in 1064, Michael Psellos was still concerned enough about his friend Romanos and the plight of his metropolitan see that he wrote to the *krites* (an official with judicial, administrative, and financial responsibilities) of the Aegean Sea to provide financial aid to the metropolitan for the rebuilding of both secular and religious buildings in the region.<sup>86</sup> If Romanos issued his seal after the devastating earthquake, then possibly his choice of image and inscription also expressed his hope, not only in theological correctness, but also in rebuilding the actual stones of his church and city as well as the spiritual rebirth required during such catastrophes. As his choice of text proclaims, "Lord, my God, whoever hopes in you is not put to shame."

The Archbishop Iakovos  
Library  
Holy Cross Greek Orthodox  
School of Theology  
50 Goddard Avenue  
Brookline, MA 02445  
jcotsonis@hchc.edu

78 For discussion of Euthymios Zigabenos and his various works, see A. Papavasileiou, *Εὐθύμιος-Ιωάννης Ζυγαβηνός: Βίος-Συγγραφαί* (Levkosia, 1979); and Sanidopoulos, *Rise of Bogomilism*, 59–65. The text of the *Panoplia Dogmatike* appears in PG 130. Hamilton and Hamilton, *Christian Dualist Heresies* provides extracts in English translation of the sections concerning the Paulicians and the Messalians, 171–74, and the Bogomils, 180–207. Sanidopoulos, *Rise of Bogomilism*, 70–137, provides an English translation of the entire section concerning Bogomilism.

79 PG 130:1292; Angold, *Church and Society*, 471 and 483; Hamilton and Hamilton, *Christian Dualist Heresies*, 182; and Sanidopoulos, *Rise of Bogomilism*, 72–73.

80 PG 130:1301, 1304 and 1317; Angold, *Church and Society*, 481 and 483; Hamilton and Hamilton, *Christian Dualist Heresies*, 186, 192 and 206; and Sanidopoulos, *Rise of Bogomilism*, 86–91 and 108–9.

81 PG 130:1308–9; Hamilton and Hamilton, *Christian Dualist Heresies*, 188; and Sanidopoulos, *Rise of Bogomilism*, 94–95.

82 Euthymios Zigabenos, *Ἑρμηνεία εἰς τὰς ἸΔ' Ἐπιστολάς τοῦ Ἀποστόλου Παύλου καὶ εἰς τὰς Ζ' Καθολικάς*, ed. N. Kalogeras, 2 vols. (Athens, 1887), 2:530–33.

83 Angold, *Church and Society*, 473 and 476.

84 For a discussion of the episcopal role in suppressing heresy, especially in the eleventh century, see *ibid.*, 472–78.

85 Michael Attaleiates, *Historia*, ed. W. Brunet de Presle and I. Bekker (Bonn, 1853), 90; E. Tsolakes, *Ἡ Συνέχεια τῆς Χρονογραφίας τοῦ Ἰωάννου Σκυλίτση* (Thessalonike, 1968), 116; and John Zonaras, *Epitome historiarum*, ed. T. Büttner-Wobst, 3 vols. (Bonn, 1841–97), 3:679–80. See also Hasluck, *Cyzicus*, 194 and Janin, *Les églises et les monastères*, 194 (both n. 1 above).

86 Sathas, *Μεσαιωνική Βιβλιοθήκη*, no. 79. For the dating and the addressee of the letter, see Oikonomides, "Un décret synodal inédit" (n. 67 above), 63–64 and *PBW*, <http://db.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/id/person/108632> (accessed 1 February 2010).